

Plumbers and Pipefitters

What Do They Do?

Plumbers and pipefitters are considered a single trade, but workers usually specialize in one area. Plumbers install and repair water, waste and gas systems in homes and commercial buildings. Pipefitters install, repair, assemble and maintain piping and pipe systems used in manufacturing. They also work on pipe systems that generate electricity and heat and cool buildings. They use their knowledge of system operation, building plans, and work drawings in doing their jobs.

Plumbers and Pipefitters may work alone or in groups, depending on the type of work and the size of the employing company. Much of the work is performed indoors or in the semi-shelter of unfinished buildings. They use many different materials and construction techniques depending on the type of project, but all must be able to follow building plans or blueprints

What Do I Have To Do To Be One?

To work as a plumber or pipefitter you must have a high school diploma or GED. Most all plumbers and pipefitters undergo some type of classroom coursework and apprenticeship training. Apprenticeship programs are usually three to four years of training beyond high school. Some courses to take in high school to prepare you for this occupation include Math, Science, Technical Drawing and Communications.

Plumbers and Pipefitters are people who generally prefer working with tools and equipment to make and repair things. They are also able to work within precise limits or standards of accuracy. They are also able to work as part of a team and work in all types of settings.

How Much Do They Make?

Salaries of Plumbers and Pipefitters usually depend on the geographical location, type, size and location of the employer and the training and skill of the worker. The yearly wages for Plumbers and Pipefitters are among the highest in the building trades.

Nationally, in 2004, basic union hourly wages rates for Plumbers in residential construction averaged about \$23.88. In commercial and industrial construction, the average basic union hourly wage rate for Plumbers was \$38. Apprentice Plumbers/Pipefitters in Michigan start at a rate of pay, which is about 45% to 50% of what qualified workers earn.

What Can I Expect From The Job Market?

About 21,600 Plumbers and Pipefitters were employed in Michigan, mostly in urban areas. Most worked for plumbing, heating, and air conditioning contractors; manufacturing companies; and gas and electric utility companies.

The employment of Plumbers and Pipefitters in Michigan is expected to grow about as fast as the average for all occupations through the year 2010. An average of about 620 job openings per year is expected. Recent increases in commercial and residential construction have increased the need for Plumbers and Pipefitters.

For more information on this occupation, click here: [Plumbers and Pipefitters Career Information](#)

Factoid

Plumbers and pipefitters install and repair pipe systems that carry water, steam, air or other fluids or gases. Plumbers and Pipefitters are considered a single trade, but workers usually specialize in one area. Plumbers install and repair water, waste and gas systems in homes and commercial buildings. Pipefitters install and repair pipe systems used in manufacturing. They also work on pipe systems that generate electricity and heat and cool buildings.

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